

A
SERMON

Preached in the

PARISH-CHURCH
OF

St. Mary, Woolwich,

IN
KENT;
ON

Sunday, May 29. 1715.

Being the Day of Thanksgiving, for putting an
End to the great Rebellion; and for the
RESTAURATION of the KING,
and the ROYAL FAMILY.

BY
SAMUEL ASPLIN, M.A.
Curate of *Woolwich.*

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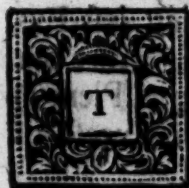
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2. S A M. XIX. II.

And King David sent to Zadok and Abiathar, the Priests, saying, Speak unto the Elders of Judah, saying; Why are ye the last to bring the King back? Seeing the Speech of all Israel is come to the King, even to his House.



T H E Restoration of King Charles II. with the Royal Family, which we this Day are thankfully to commemorate; as it nearly resembles that of King David's, so it much surpasses it in all the Circumstances of the Grand Rebellion, out of which it did deliver us.

There is no Place of Scripture can come up to that: No, nor in all the Writings of Prophane History. It was a Rebellion so black, that it not only murdered the Father of his Country, and sent the Princes and Nobles into Banishment; but it was

carried on for well nigh twenty Years, by the remorseless Rage of a foul ill-bred Tyrant; and by a Faction that were Professors of Moderation without Mercy, of Conscience without Justice, of Piety without Pity; but canted, and pray'd, and whined themselves into ten thousand Murders and Persecutions.

As often as I read over the miserable Scene of Things in those Days of *Cromwellism*, Villany, and Ravage; when Hell itself had broke loose, and Confusion had so long time obtain'd Dominion over us: --- I say, when I reflect upon this dismal State of Things; I cannot but wonder at the Temper of the good old Royalists, when God, by a miraculous Turn of Providence, restor'd them to Peace and Kingly Government, that instead of committing less Extravagances, they had not (like Nature out of a starv'd Condition feeding upon Plenty) even surfeited themselves in an Excess of Joy.

Let the *British* Annals boast of the triumphant Entries of their Kings, their Deliverers, and their Saviours, as some blasphemously are mad to flatter: Yet God at this time was our true Deliverer and Saviour, by bringing back the King, to rescue a People sickning and fainting almost to Death, in an Age, weighty with Cruelty, Rapine, and Devastation.

Others

Others, since these sad Times, might have welcom'd their Princes to the Throne with Contrain'd Hosannas, and Hypocritical Acclamations: But to be delivered by the Restauration of their Rightful Sovereign, from all the Oppression that humane Nature could well labour under; this must have turn'd a Thanksgiving into a Triumph! And the Royal *Stuarts* must have been congratulated to their Estates and Dignities, as well upon the Welfare of the People, as their own!

* *Then it was, when the Lord turned again* * *psal.*
the Captivity of our Sion: Our Ancestors were *cxxvi. 1,*
like unto them that dream. Then said they *2, 3.*
among the Heathen (that is those Rebels
 that had harras'd and oppress'd them)
the Lord hath done great Things for them.
Their Mouths were then fill'd with Laughter
and their Tongues with Joy.

Methinks now I have gotten thus far, I could drop my Text, and instead of adhering closely to the Places of Divinity, I should rather run you out an Harangue of loud Praises to the God of our Salvation.

But because it falls out that I am to speak to you on this Subject on the Lord's Day; a constant Day of Thanksgiving, for the Resurrection of Jesus Christ: So God be praised, I can now better subjoin an Inference to that Article, in the Resurrection of our *English* Church and Monarchy: Wherein the true Religion
 of

of our Redeemer is sincerely profess'd, and purely taught; and I might add, rais'd from the Grave, almost by the same Miracle, when it was dead, and buried in Anarchy, Hypocrisy, and Enthusiasm.

The Words which I have read to you for the Text, are those of *David* in Banishment, occasion'd by the Rebellion of his Son *Abshalom*.

And tho' the Return of *David* could not be so illustrious as that of *Charles*, because the Usurpation of his Kingdom was not so great, so base, so long, and so tyrannical; yet the Usherings in of his Restoration were, in every Circumstance, the same with the Heir of the Royal Martyr.

The Hierarchy of the *Jewish Sanhedrin*, *Zadok* and *Abiathar*, the High Priest and his Suffragan, were sent to by *David*, and deputed *ex officio* to remind the Nobles of *Judah* of the indisputable Right of their Legal Sovereign: And the unanimous Voice of all *Israel*, that is, the Voice of all his People, had been beforehand with them in their Duty, and had reach'd the Bars of the King in Exile, and solicited his Return. These Things were commanded by the King to be made use of by the principal Clergy of *Israel*, as Arguments to inspire Loyalty, and to upbraid those of Cowardice, and Tardiness, from whom
the

the King expected more Resolution, and Allegiance, as being the Chiefs of his Family, and the Seniors and Magistrates of his Kingdom. * For King David sent to * *Ver. 13.*
Zadok and Abiathar, the Priests, saying, speak unto the Elders of Judah, why are ye the last to bring back the King unto his House? Seeing the Speech of all Israel is come unto the King, even to, &c.

From the Text thus opened, these three Propositions do naturally arise; the Sense of which, I think, is either apparent in the Words, or may be fairly drawn from them.

First, By King David's sending to *Zadok and Abiathar*, the High Priests of *Israel*, to negotiate his Return, it is manifest, how much the Civil and Ecclesiastical Magistrate are united in the same Interests; that is, how much good Government and true Religion depend on each other.

Secondly, By the Charge given to *Zadok and Abiathar*, to exercise their Ministerial Office in persuading and exhorting the People, especially those of the first Rank, the People of *Judah*; it is plain, that it was the Interest of the Nobles of that Kingdom, to restore their Lawful Sovereign, and defend his Government.

Third-

Thirdly, The Speech of all *Israel* advis'd them to that; it had reach'd the King's Bars in his Solitude; and we may suppose the general Cry of the People was, *Let the King return*. Which shews that Kingly Government accommodates itself best to the Generality, tho' it hits not every particular wayward Temper; yet is better secured and stands safer, when it is founded upon Righteousness.

I am of Opinion, that these Particulars do well agree with the Conduct and Manage of the Restauration of King *Charles* and the Royal Family: And that I may make a Space for the glad and thankful Remembrance of that signal Mercy, I shall but briefly essay towards the Proof of the foregoing Propositions.

1. First then, by the Message of *Devil* to the High Priests concerning his Return, it appears how much good Government and true Religion depend on each other. The Reasons for this Doctrine may be taken from the necessary Dependence of the very first Principles of Government upon Religion. Without Dispute, the whole Hierarchy of the *Levitical* Priesthood, could not, with any Colour of Authority, expound the Laws of Justice and Righteousness to the People, when they could shew

no Right in themselves to teach and to govern, and when they themselves, by taking upon them to do, did but act as so many Hands without a Head, the Foundation of all their Persuatives to Obedience and Morality being removed, by the Excluding of their Lawful Head, the supreme Magistrate to authorize and direct them. For where the whole Government is excentrick, and the legislative Power is usurped, there all Arguments to Obedience must drop on Course: And it is so far, in that Case, from being Righteous in the Ecclesiastick Magistrate to teach Obedience, that it is downright Iniquity. The Contrary indeed may be done, but it must be done with great Impudence and Contradiction, and by dashing the two Tables of *Moses* one against another. For whenever the Civil Power is invaded, there generally speaking Mens Consciences and Estates are prey'd upon both together. As there can be no Religion where God's Worship is perverted, so when the Foundation and Head of Government is wanting or taken off, all Obedience both Religious and Conscientious are consequently destroyed: For Religion and the Conscience are mortal Enemies to an unjust Title.

Again, 2. The great Design of good Government is to procure Obedience, and quell and subdue Rebellion and Disobedience. It

Exod. 28.
1, 2.

was this that coupled and chain'd *Moses* and *Aaron*, and united both their Religious and Civil Interests ; for when the Former by God was invested with the Kingly Government, God's Vicegerent vested the Priesthood in his Brother *Aaron* : Nature herself could not make these Magistrates more akin, than their spiritual and temporal Engagement : For as the Former was the Lawful and Supreme Head, so the Latter taught the People Obedience to his Laws, by striking the Minds of Men with Rewards and Punishments, proportionable to their Hopes and Fears in all the Measures of their Obedience.

For when Religion binds Men fast in their Duties to God and the King by a conscientious Impulse, then Conscience will either persuade or affright Men into their Duties.

From all this it follows, that the Civil Magistrate cannot stand without the intermediate Assistance of Religion : And it was no Wonder that *Zadok* and *Abiathar* were sent to by *David*, and commanded by virtue of their Sacerdotal Office to reduce and exhort the People to the Obedience of the Lawful King.

2. I come now to make good my Second Proposition, that by the Charge given to *Zadok* and *Abiathar* the Priests to quicken and incite Allegiance to King *David*, especially those of the best Families, the Tribe
of

of *Judah*, it is clear how much it was the Interest of the Noblemen of that Kingdom to restore their Lawful Prince, and defend his Government. We read in the Story of this Rebellion, with what Vigour and Application, *Joab*, *Amasa*, and *Husai*, and several others of the Chief Captains of the People, endeavour'd to defeat the Policies of *Achitophel*, and to dissolve that unnatural Rebellion. And they met with their desired Success, which ended gloriously in the Extirpation of the Rebels, and the Restauration of the King their Master. That great Enterprize, as it was the Duty, so it was the Advantage, of the King's true Friends. For had the usurp'd Dominion of *Abshalom* continued, they of all others had the least Reason to expect any tolerable Treatment, no not Protection, perhaps not common Mercy. For they being old Royalists, and steady to a Principle, seasoned in all the Arts of the Camp and the Cabinet, and by Inclination inviolably attach'd to Honour and their King, they could have no Prospect of a Life agreeable to their generous Views, with a giddy young Rebel, who was so headstrong to reject *Achitophel's* Counsel, a Man the most artificial in all the Kingdom. And withal, who was of so base and abject a Temper, as to court the very Rabble in the Gate; and by unmanly Compliances, to stoop so low, as

2. Sam.

7. 16. 15.

2. Sam.

xvi. 23.

to beg of them a mean and pitiful Support in his Tyranny.

These were but dull Motives, you may imagine, for Men of their elevated Spirit to forsake their good old King, who was a Man of War, and had so often sav'd them from the Hands of their Enemies, and deliver'd them by his Prowess and Wisdom from the insulting *Philistine*; to join with *Absalom*, a raw young Man, who had just as much Title, as he had Wisdom and Conduct to reign over them.

These, I think, were sufficient Reasons, all, had not *Absalom* himself been cut off in the midst of his Usurpation, to have induc'd these great Men of the House of *Judah*, purely upon the Dint of Interest, as well as Allegiance and Gratitude, to have restored *David* to the Possession of his Throne. But,

3. Thirdly, The Speech of all *Israel* did advise them to this: It had reach'd the King in his Retirement at *Mahanaim*; and we may suppose the Voice of the People of all *Israel* was (now after they had smarted by the Sting of an Usurper) *Let the King live! Let the King return!* This shews us that Monarchy, when founded in Righteousness, accommodates itself best to the Generality, tho' it suits not with every stubborn Temper; yet it is best secured, and stands safer, when it is bottomed upon Right uncontestable.

I be-

I believe there is something so sacred in the Divine Right of Kings, and in their Legal Accession to their respective Thrones, (by the Legality of their Accession to the Throne, I mean by God and their Birth-right) that there are some invisible Irradiations and Streams, flowing from their Persons, that strike both the upper and lower Part of Mankind with a religious Obedience to them, and a more than common Veneration. *I have said, ye are Gods, &c.* * *Ex* * *Hesiod.* * *Theog. v.* * *96.* * *Psal. 82.* * *6.* * *2. Thess.* * *1. 7.* * *αγγέλων* * *δωδόμε-* * *ως αὐτοῖς,*

For this Reason, perhaps, it is, that even the People of *England*, whose Cries have been heretofore denominated the Voice of God, after they had onte their Swing of Usurpation, and had seen the Deformity, and tasted the Bitterness, of a degenerated and corrupted Government; have been always impatient to slip out of that uneasy Yoke, into the Obedience of their Undoubted Sovereigns. As it was with the People of *Israel* in the Text, when after the slavish Fatigue of an unnatural Rebellion, their Hearts and their Wishes, and their Voices too, were loud, and keen, and craving enough, to recall King *David* Home: For the Speech of all *Israel* did come unto the King, even unto his House.

To

To clear up the Truth of these Remarks upon *David's* Banishment and Return; we need not travel abroad, to fetch Conventions and Discoveries; or to set up the deformed Carcass of any Rebellion to be hooted at by the Light of the Mid-day Sun. Ours at Home hath been far more ugly, and mishapen, and dark, in all its Parts; and did grow at length to such an unsizeable Pitch, that the scaly *Leviathan*, the many-headed *Hydra*, did appear too big to be crush'd: And a Restauration of Kingly Government, and Order, and Peace, amidst such a *Chaos* of Confusion, which befell these sinful Nations, was a Thing that could not be hop'd for: Tho' all good Men pray'd for it, longed and desired after it, yet they must have utterly despaired of that Blessing, had not there been a *Dignus Dei* in the Case; the Finger of God, and the Interposition of his Divine Providence plainly Miraculous! Which

These Three Observations will demonstrate.

1. *First*, The uncomfortable Prospect of Things, that disfigured the whole Face of the Grand Rebellion.

2. *Secondly*, The little or no Hopes of the Restauration of the King and Government. And,

3. *Third*.

3. *Thirdly*, notwithstanding all this, the astonishing and unaccountable Return of the King and the Royal Family.

1. For the First, to such a Pitch of Tyrannizing over every Thing, that look'd like Loyalty, and Conscience, and Conformity to the best Church and King in the World, did that execrable Monster *Cromwell* rear up his *Babel* Scheme of Government, that it was not safe for a good Loyal Subject to shew his Head without the Danger of Losing it. For whoever had not taken the Covenant to betray God and the King, by the most solemn Manner of Blaspheming both; was not Holy and Sanctify'd enough for that Hypocritical Brood of Infernal Vipers.

It would raise a pious Indignation, even in the meek and merciful *Jesus*, to have seen the pretended, spiritual, gifted, and precise Postures, into which those *Pharisaical* Zealots screw'd themselves; when they intended to pray and preach a generous Royalist out of his Blood and Fortune. For when the Covenant, that Holy Thing, was made, their black Caps, tip'd with white, did seem wonderfully moving with a Zealous Tradesman; and the Twang of the Nose was sufficient to demonstrate that Dominion was founded in Grace; and therefore

fore the Lives and Fortunes of a Hundred Cavaliers in a Morning, must be sacrific'd, inhumane Villains, to what they call'd the Necessities of the Lord.

It would be too shocking to repeat the Barbarity and Hypocrisy of those Times; when the Flower of the Nobility and Gentry were cut off, or else sequestred, banish'd, imprisoned: And when,---Must I repeat it?---When the Royal Martyr, a King not to be match'd for Excellencies, fell a Victim to the Fury of blood-thirsty Men. When our Religion was abolished, and the Government of Church and State overferg, and instead of both succeeded, I know not what, a wild Kind of Atheism, under the Veil of Purity, Reformation, and Fanatick Rage: While Tinkers, and Cobblers, and Draymen, became Lords over God's Inheritance. But add to all this,

Secondly, The little or no Hopes the persecuted Cavaliers had left, to retrieve their Affairs, and return their Rightful Sovereign to his Crown and Government.

The Restoration of the King was a Mercy at that Time little expected; the Desires of bringing him back were very strong, but then, alas! their Hopes were but feeble: For the Greatness of such a Blessing over-surmounted their Prayers and Wishes; and when they survey'd the Difficulties,

with

with which such an Affair was entangled, they could not but despair of it. For,

1. It was the Forfeiture of Life to enter-
tain so much as the least Thought of the
King; tho' to conceal his Person, was the
Duty of every good Subject, yet not to be-
tray him, in those Days, was accounted an
Act of High Treason.

Again, 2. There was a Reward set upon
his Head; and surely a good Sum of Money
was a Temptation powerful enough with
those, whose Spirits were as base and low
as their Estates. For if Cowardice would
make some refuse to conceal him, yet a little
Lucre might have been apt to have spirited
the most timorous to betray him; though
it had been, at the same Time, a Making
of their Fortunes, by the Undoing of their
Sovereign.

3. Thirdly, Such slender Hopes had the
Royalists, of the Returning of the King,
that there were new Oaths coin'd and
invented to prevent it. And tho' his Ene-
mies had formerly engag'd their Lives
against him; yet then they were to engage
their very Souls. As if it had not been e-
nough for the Rebels to have acted with
an Arm of Steel, but they must act too
with a Conscience of Brass; and so wipe
off the Guilt of renouncing their Rightful
Sovereign, by making it a Perjury to ac-
knowledge him.

C

Lastly,

Lastly, Under these insuperable Difficulties, as is evident from the Noble Historian, King *Charles* was brought back, and restored to his Crown and Dignities: Which shews us, that those Things which seem impossible with Man, are not so with God.

Earl of
Clarendon.

Luke 18.
27.

It is amazing to consider of this great Act of Providence, That a small Number, a Handful of Men from *Scotland*, should open a Back-Door into Three Kingdoms, and let in the King and Royal Family, and with them the whole Regal Government, without striking one Stroke, or spilling one Drop of Blood---That he should be brought in without the Suspicion of his Enemies, and beyond the Expectation of his Friends. O, surely, it was the Lord's Doing, and it is marvellous in our Eyes! That it should please God, by a most extraordinary Act of Mercy, to dissolve on a sudden our Confusions, and to restore us to Order, after we had been so long benighted with the dark Shadows of Anarchy: That God should dissipate those Clouds, and restore us to a bright Day of Liberty and Religion.

Upon my Soul (for it is the firm Persuasion of my Soul) I believe, That as God is always inclin'd to shew Mercy, so at this Time, it was only for the Sake of the old persecuted Royalists, who had suffered a great Sight of Afflictions, that God delivered

Heb. 10.
11.



(19)
vered these sinful Nations from a twenty
Years Tyranny and Rebellion.

This is a Theme that Posterity ought to
dwell upon; for I dare challenge this Day,
in the Presence of God, any the greatest Anti-
quary in the *English Annals*, to produce any
President of this Kind in *English History*,
that is better furnished with Materials and
Grounds of admiring, and adoring, and
praising, the unsearchable Wisdom and
Goodness of the Great God.

To which God, fearful in Prises, and
working Wonders, be ascribed, as is
most due, all Praise and Thanksgiving,
Might, Majesty, and Dominion, now,
and for Evermore. Amen.



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